



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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National Fruits and Vegetables Report Shows North Dakotans Should Eat More Fruits and Vegetables for Good Health

BISMARCK, N.D. – The *State Indicator Report on Fruits and Vegetables, 2009*, released today by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), shows that North Dakotans should eat more fruits and vegetables for good health.

The *State Indicator Report* shows that no state in the country meets national goals for fruit and vegetable consumption, which is for 75 percent of Americans to eat at least two servings of fruit every day and 50 percent to eat at least three servings of vegetables daily. According to the *State Indicator Report*, 29 percent of adults in North Dakota meet the daily fruit recommendation and 24 percent meet the vegetable recommendation. Furthermore, 27 percent of North Dakota high school students meet the daily fruit recommendation and only 11 percent meet the vegetable recommendation. The percentages for both adults and students in North Dakota are below the national average.

“A diet high in fruits and vegetables is important for optimal child growth, management of weight, and prevention of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and some cancers, all of which contribute to health-care costs in North Dakota,” said State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D. “This report can help North Dakota business leaders, coalitions and community-based organizations identify policies that can be implemented or improved to promote healthy eating among our residents.”

State and local partners and coalitions have been working to address the importance of healthy eating. For example, some schools in North Dakota, including those in the Valley City and Jamestown districts, serve locally grown produce like tomatoes, cucumbers and apples to

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students. In addition, North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring announced earlier this month that 11 communities in the state will be assessed for the possibility of establishing a direct link between local agricultural producers and school lunch programs. “I am confident that with the growth of local food production and the support of parents and school officials, we will see more and more local foods appearing on school lunch menus across North Dakota,” Goehring said.

Farmers markets are another venue for accessing fresh fruits and vegetables. North Dakota has one of the highest rates of farmers markets per person in the U.S., with 7.5 farmers markets per 100,000 people. “North Dakota’s farmers markets are a place for people to come together, find access to fresh, healthy foods, provide producers with a direct market for products, and support North Dakota’s local economy,” said Holly Rose Mawby, executive director of the North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Association.

“We will be sharing the information in this report with our partners at the state and local level to help them create policies and environments that encourage and promote healthy eating,” said Deanna Askew, Healthy Weight/Healthy Communities coordinator for the Department of Health. “It’s important for all of us to work together to help North Dakotans access healthy foods so that they can live long, healthy and productive lives.”

The *State Indicator Report on Fruits and Vegetable, 2009*, is available from CDC’s Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/indicatorreport. In addition, *Healthy North Dakota* offers tips, recipes and information for choosing fruits and vegetables in season at www.healthynd.org/In_Season.html.

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